



The President's Daily Brief

September 19, 1975

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

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USSR

General Secretary Brezhnev's meeting on Wednesday with Konstantin Zarodov, the author of a hard-line article on communist party tactics, suggests that Brezhnev feels sufficiently vulnerable to criticism from his more doctrinaire colleagues to make a gesture in their direction. The fact that this was Brezhnev's first publicly announced appearance since his return from vacation on August 30, and that he usually shies away from such ideological matters, adds to the significance of the meeting.

Zarodov's article, with which Brezhnev now is associated, appeared in Pravda on August 6. It argued that communist parties should put revolutionary integrity ahead of cooperation with non-communist parties and should not let democratic procedures stand in the way of seizing power. The article drew criticism from West European parties, and Yugoslav media have taken sharp issue with the central theme.

Some Soviet officials, apparently embarrassed by the impact of the article, tried on several occasions over the past month to pass off the Zarodov diatribe as a "mistake." Brezhnev's meeting with the author presumably will end this effort.

What political pressures caused Brezhnev to take this step is an open question. One possibility is that the declining fortunes of the Portuguese Communists, following the Chilean debacle, have left a very sour taste in the mouths of those leaders troubled by the conflicting priorities of promoting detente and maintaining the health of the international communist movement. The Sinai II agreement may have made those most closely associated with detente more vulnerable. Brezhnev's decision ostentatiously to protect his ideological flank may be the result.

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There was a message in the Brezhnev-Zarodov meeting for the French and the Italian Communists who have practiced and defended political alliances with non-communist parties. In addition it probably will be read by Portuguese Communist leaders as support for a tougher stance as they deal with the new government in Lisbon.

Whether or not a signal also was intended for the US and the West in general, Brezhnev must have assumed it would be read as a toughening of the Soviet attitude across the board.

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LEBANON

The security situation in Beirut deteriorated yesterday as fighting spread to almost every section of the city. Fires, kidnapings, and sniper fire were widespread. Both sides reportedly had agreed to a cease-fire late yesterday, but the fighting continues today in many areas of Beirut, long after the truce was scheduled to take effect.

As of late yesterday, Prime Minister Karami, fearful of a sharp fedayeen-leftist reaction, continued to oppose the use of the army to end the fighting. Interior Minister Shamun told an embassy official, however, that he and several other members of the cabinet had told Karami that if the crisis were not solved early today, Shamun as interior minister had the authority to order the army to intervene and would do so. Shamun also said that he did not believe the use of the army would prompt the Syrians to intervene.

The use of the army could bring the more moderate organizations into the conflict against the government. Until now, Fatah, the principal fedayeen organization, has attempted to play a mediating role. Its leaders have expressed the fear that Fatah might become involved in the fighting if the army should fire on leftist elements.

Yesterday, for the first time during the current round of fighting, the right-wing Phalanges Party militia exchanged fire with Lebanese leftists and radical fedayeen. The Phalangists, who were deeply involved in the fighting in June, have been increasingly unhappy that the government has not called in the army.

Lebanese security officials believe that the leftists and the radical fedayeen are responsible for the sudden escalation of the fighting. These groups may feel that the continued strife eventually will overturn the present system of government, delicately balanced among Lebanon's religious communities, and pave the way for a Muslim, leftist-dominated regime more sympathetic to the Palestinians.

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PORtUGAL

The Revolutionary Council announced this morning that the new government has been formed and will be installed later today. Portuguese Socialist leader Soares told Ambassador Carlucci last night that the Socialists will receive four portfolios, and the Popular Democrats and the Communists will each get two.

The three major political parties will control only half of the total number of cabinet posts, but most of the military and civilian appointees are expected to follow the Socialists' lead. Soares described the new cabinet as a "humiliating defeat for the Communists."

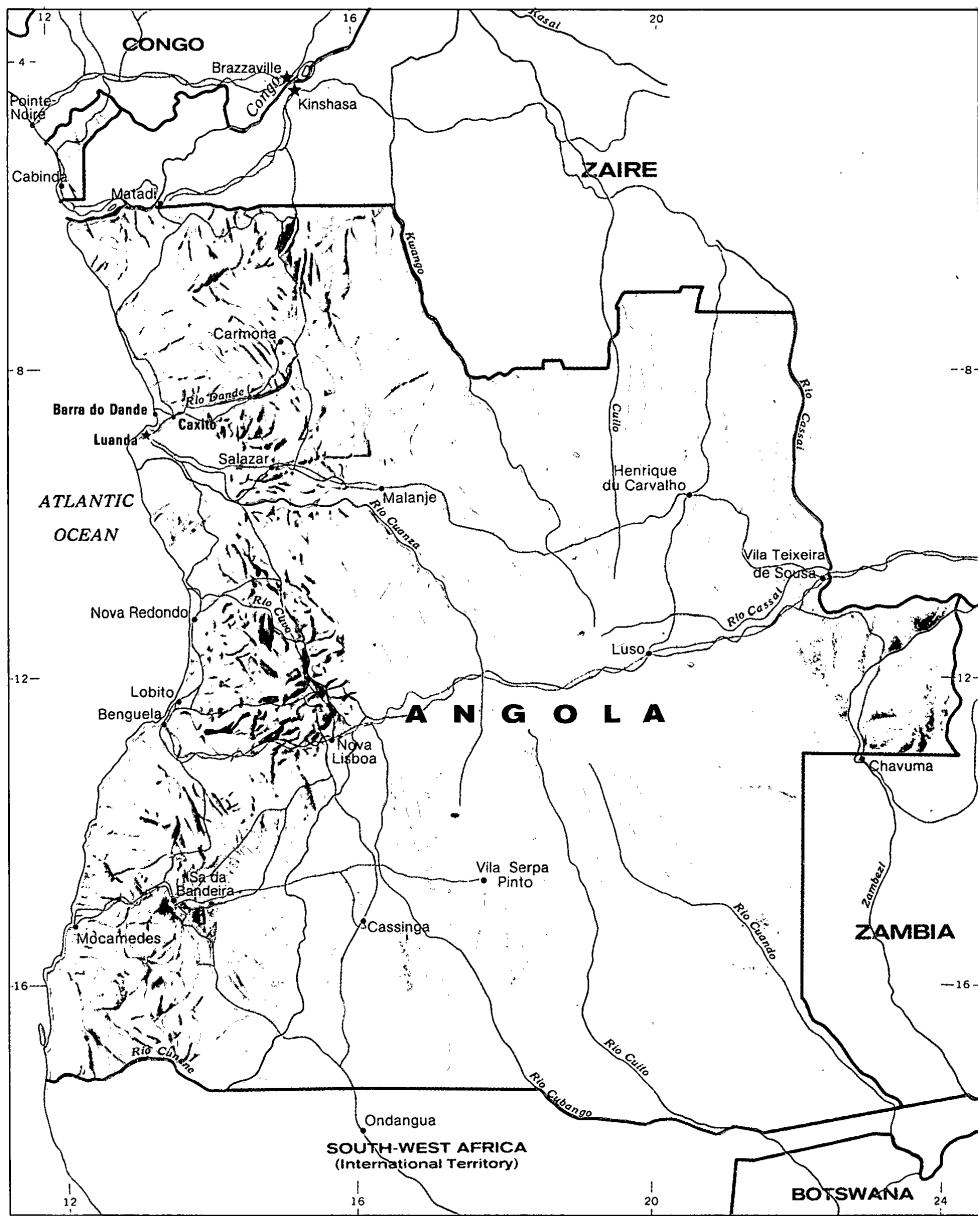
The Communists have already begun to criticize the cabinet and claim that they are participating only to prevent the formation of an "openly rightist government." The Communist-dominated Portuguese Democratic Movement--which has been represented in the last two cabinets despite meager popular support--has scheduled an anti-government rally for September 28, the anniversary of the ouster of former president Spinola.

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[redacted] Democratic Movement for the Liberation of Portugal has canceled plans for a "happening" this Saturday. The group's leadership may have difficulty in communicating the change of plan to activists who are inside Portugal and scattered along the Spanish border. [redacted] the cancellation is largely the result of pressure by Western governments.

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ANGOLA

*The National Front for the Libera-
tion of Angola*

[redacted] apparently has
launched a counteroffensive to retake
Caxito, which it surrendered to the
Popular Movement for the Liberation
of Angola two weeks ago.

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Information on the fighting is sketchy. Portuguese military officials in Luanda said on Wednesday night that clashes between the two groups were taking place "north of the Caxito - Barra do Dande front." Both liberation groups are claiming significant victories in the area.

The present fighting is very likely to become one of the most serious campaigns yet in the territory because the National Front is virtually fighting for its survival. Isolated in the north and with less than two months before Angola is granted independence, the National Front must move rapidly and strongly to restore its military credibility with both the Portuguese and the Popular Movement in order to obtain a political role in the independent government. The recapture of Caxito is vital to the National Front's credibility.

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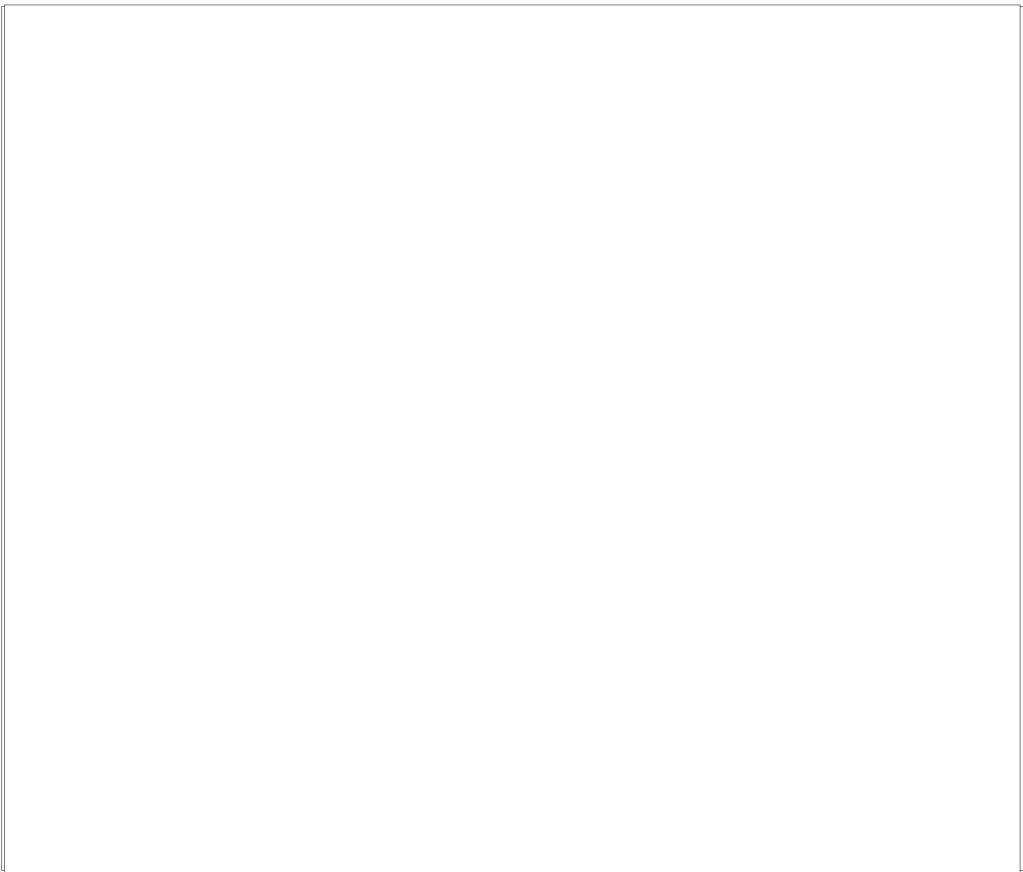
The Popular Movement, for its part, is making a determined effort to show that it is the only nationalist group capable of running the territory. It cannot afford to let the National Front make even minimal gains and may decide to try to push it out of Angola entirely.

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USSR

The Soviets are moving ahead with programs to modify silos for new ICBMs. All six SS-9 and the twelve SS-11 missile complexes are involved; work at the single SS-13 complex probably will begin soon.

Converting to SS-18s

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Recent satellite photography shows that work on the conversion of 18 SS-9 silos for the SS-18 probably will be completed before the end of this year. Another eight new silos are being built at the same locations. In addition, the Soviets should complete the conversion of 36 other SS-9 silos and the construction of eight SS-18 silos by mid-to-late 1976.

Work on a group of ten missile silos at the Dombarovskiy complex was finished late last year. The SS-18 Mod-1 is now in these silos.

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SS-11s to SS-17s

The Soviets are converting SS-11 silos for the SS-17 at the Yedrovo complex. Although work is under way at only one group, launch control silos under construction for three other groups indicate that more silos will be converted shortly.

The first and so far only SS-17 group was completed in June, and missiles have been installed. All 110 SS-11 silos could be converted for the SS-17 by late 1977.

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Conversion for SS-19s

A total of five groups of SS-11 silos at three complexes are being converted for the SS-19. Three of these groups should be completed before the end of this year. Work on seven other SS-19 groups has been completed at two of the complexes.

At the Tatishchevo complex, the Soviets could begin converting SS-11 silos for the SS-19 at any time. SS-19 silo components have been stockpiled there for more than a year.

By 1979, all 350 SS-11 silos at the four complexes could be modified for the SS-19. In addition, 60 new SS-19 silos built at two of the complexes since late 1970 now contain SS-11 variants, but these missiles will probably be replaced by the SS-19 within the next year.

At the Kostroma complex the Soviets apparently intend to convert the SS-11 silos for either the SS-17 or the SS-19. The rail support facilities are being expanded to stockpile new silo components, and a launch control silo is under construction. Until the new silo components are actually delivered, it cannot be determined whether the SS-17 or SS-19 will be installed in the 90 silos at this complex.

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Modernizing the SS-11

Silos at the remaining six SS-11 complexes are being modernized for the SS-11 Mod-2 and Mod-3. Work on all 420 will probably be completed by late this year or early next year.

The Mod-2 carries a single re-entry vehicle and possibly two penetration aids, and the Mod-3 has three re-entry vehicles.

Still to Come: the SS-X-16

The Soviets probably will begin replacing the 60 SS-13 missiles with the SS-X-16 at the Yoshkar-Ola complex before the end of this year. It is believed that few if any modifications will be necessary before installing the SS-X-16, and that the missile could be installed in all 60 silos within a year.

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NOTES

Greece apparently intends to stall substantive negotiations on its relationship with NATO in order to prod the alliance into taking a more active role in resolving bilateral issues between Athens and Ankara.

Prior to the North Atlantic Council meeting on September 17, NATO representatives were cautiously optimistic that Athens was prepared to discuss concrete proposals for reintegrating Greece into the military side of NATO. Greek Ambassador Theodoropoulos instead emphasized that "progress in the negotiations will be a function of the overall political situation within the alliance." [redacted]

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Athens would proceed cautiously in the talks, and that any stalling or equivocation would be a tactic aimed at buying time to prepare the Greek public for re-entry into NATO. It is clear that Athens also wants to maintain pressure on Turkey. [redacted]

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Argentina's Acting President Luder's strong exercise of authority in reorganizing the cabinet on Monday is having a positive impact on the politicians and the military.

Luder apparently forced the resignation of the controversial interior minister and also removed President Peron's private secretary. According to our embassy's sources, he is going to continue to restructure the administration, taking advantage of the President's absence to undermine her remaining political strength and possibly to launch a bid of his own to retain the office. [redacted]

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Indian Prime Minister Gandhi may be worried about the army's loyalty. She [redacted] has issued orders barring the army from conducting maneuvers in the New Delhi area without first obtaining specific government authorization.

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Some military officers may be unhappy about the authoritarian steps Gandhi has taken during the past three months, but most officers, like most of the Indian public, have appeared to be supporting or at least acquiescing in her actions.

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